Negroes
BLACKS

DEFENSE TRAINING AND JOBS FOR NEGROES

OUR WAR-TIME RESPONSIBILITY AND OPPORTUNITY

WASHINGTON COUNCIL

NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

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(Phone Michigan 2000)

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F O R E W O R D

The war emergency has raised to a new level of importance the problem of training Negro workers for skilled jobs. In promoting the extension of such training, we now make a big contribution, not only to the economic advance of the Negro, but also to our nation's efforts to win the war.

This pamphlet seeks to interpret the changing nature of the problem of defense employment for Negroes, to describe and evaluate the defense training programs available in the District of Columbia, and to suggest constructive measures by which existing programs may be placed on a trully all-out, wartime basis. For the factual material here presented, grateful acknowledgment is made to Dr. Garnet C. Wilkinson, First Assistant Superintendent of Schools, Divisions 10 - 13, and to Mr. Edgar P. Westmoreland, Director of the Division of Vocational Education.

It is our hope that publication of this pamphlet will serve to stimulate individual citizens, school officials and organized groups of citizens to work for the fullest possible use of the defense training facilities which our community affords. All that we now do to further the preparation of thousands of additional Negro workers for defense employment contributes both to the advancement of the Negro people and to the crucial task of winning the war.

Washington Council of the
NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS

Rev. M. Cecil Mills, President

THE PROBLEM IN BRIEF

A major necessity for winning the war is to win the Battle of War Production. This requires many millions of additional defense workers.

Now, as never before, Negro workers are being employed on skilled jobs in defense industries. In the immediate future, this trend will develop even more rapidly. The big problem now is quickly to train thousands of Negro workers for the jobs which our expanding war industry is certain to create.

In the District of Columbia, there are many different types of defense training available to Negro youths and adults. These training programs are operated without cost to the enrollee, during both the day and night. Yet, enrollments in the courses are far below capacity. Further, some of the training facilities at hand are not made available for maximum use.

At a time when our nation has such urgent need for additional workers in war industries, failure fully to utilize available defense training facilities represents tragic waste. This situation must be corrected at once. To this end, the efforts of school officials, city authorities, organized groups, and individual citizens must promptly be directed. Nothing is now more important for winning the war. Nothing is now more important for the occupational advance of the Negro now and after the war is won.

The problem is serious. The time is short. Now is the time for us to move!

THE BATTLE OF PRODUCTION

In the struggle in which our nation is now engaged, the stakes are no than our very existence as a free and independent people. For the Negro, a for all Americans, the preservation of those liberties and other social gai have thus far made, including even the right to fight for a better society the future, depends directly upon our defeat of the Axis powers. To this e -- victory over the fascist aggressors -- the full energies of us all must be directed.

Victory in this war will not be won by troops and ships and planes alo No less important than the winning of military victories on land, on the sea in the air is the winning of battles in our offices and factories and field We must produce at once more planes, more tanks, more guns and more ships t the combined production of Germany, Italy, Japan and their vassal countries We must produce at once enough food and other farm products to supply our o people, the armies and peoples of the United Nations, and to lay aside vast stores for the increased needs of the future. Not only must the enemy be o fought; he must be out-produced. To win this war, we must first win the Ba of Production.

THE NEGRO IN THE BATTLE OF PRODUCTION

The President has set as our industrial war production goal for 1942: 60,000 planes, 45,000 tanks, 20,000 anti-aircraft guns, and 8,000,000 tons shipping. On the other front of the Battle of Production, the Department o Agriculture has launched its 1942 "Food For Victory" program, calling for t greatest production of food in the history of our nation. These programs w require many millions of additional skilled and semi-skilled workers and te nicians -- millions more than are now at hand. Herein lies a tremendous ne field of employment for the Negro worker. Herein also lies a chance for us serve our country in its crucial battle to out-produce the Axis.

In the recent past, and to some extent even now, Negro skilled workers and technicians have had to fight for a chance to join in the Battle of Production. Agitation for "Defense Jobs For Negroes" was in order. Now, however, the nature of this problem is changing. Governmental agencies and defense industries are employing unprecedented numbers of Negro machinists, carpenters, sheet-metal workers, automobile and aeroplane mechanics, typists, economists, scientists, etc. -- and calling for more and more. The time rapidly approaches when the problem of finding defense jobs for Negroes will largely disappear. Already, the more acute problem is: How can we prepare Negroes to fill the jobs which a rapidly expanding war industry is creating?

THE INCREASING DEMAND FOR SKILLED NEGRO WORKERS IN THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Our most urgent and crucial task during this period is to train hundreds of thousands of Negro workers for skilled jobs in the expanding defense industries -- and to do it quickly! To this end, we Negroes in the District of Columbia have a real war-time responsibility to perform. We are also confronted with a most unusual opportunity.

The Civil Service Commission is crying for even fairly skilled typists -- and all who are found are getting jobs. The Navy Yard is hiring every Negro machinist it can find. The Glenn Martin Airplane Factory, near Baltimore, is hiring Negro skilled workers in many capacities. So it is with Negro draftsmen, welders, carpenters, sheet-metal workers, mechanics, and other types of skilled workers. So it is also with such highly trained technicians as economists, physicists, chemists, nurses and engineers.

The demand for skilled Negro workers in this area is already here, and it is growing more and more intense. Where and how can local Negroes get trained to meet this demand?

INADEQUATELY USED DEFENSE TRAINING FACILITIES FOR NEGROES IN WASHINGTON

In Washington, more than is true in any other segregated school system in the country, Negroes have extensive opportunities to obtain training for defense jobs -- mostly at public expense. True, we need even more facilities than there are. But even those we have are not being fully used.

There follows a summary of the major types of defense training and related programs available to Negroes in the District of Columbia. In each case, the nature of the program, requirements for entrance, enrollment, and current "unused" opportunities are noted. Included are (1) "pre-employment" training for adults who want to enter skilled jobs; (2) supplementary training for adults already employed in skilled or semi-skilled work; (3) N.Y.A. and other programs for non-school youth; (4) vocational education programs in the regular day and evening schools; and (5) college and university training for more advanced students.

1. Pre-employment Defense Training for Adults

Any unemployed adult who is registered with the D.C. Employment Center may enroll in "pre-employment" National Defense classes at Armstrong High School (O Street between 1st and 3rd Streets, N.W.) or at Phelps Vocational High School (23rd Street north of Benning Road, N.E.). W.P.A. workers are assigned to these training courses with pay. However, any unemployed adult can enroll, the sole requirement being that he register first with the D.C. Employment Center. Application to enter the courses should be made at the Principal's Office of the school concerned.

Classes meet five nights per week, from midnight to 8:00 A.M. The courses offered, the enrollment and the number of vacancies (or "unused" training opportunities) in these two schools are tabulated below.

SUBJECT	ENROLLMENT (Jan. 28, 1942)	VACANCIES (Unused Opportunities)
Armstrong High School		
Automobile Mechanics	13	7
Cabinet and Mill Work	15	5
Drafting and Blueprint Reading	17	13
Machine Shop Practice	9	11
Sheet Metal	10	10
Total	64	46

Phelps Vocational School		
Airplane Engine Mechanics	10	5
Automobile Mechanics	11	9
Cabinet and Mill Work	19	1
Drafting and Blueprint Reading	14	6
Electricity	19	1
Machine Shop Practice	8	12
Sheet Metal	13	7
Welding	15	5
Total	109	46

It will be noted that Armstrong and Phelps offer 13 "pre-employment" defense training classes in 8 different fields. They are equipped to take care of 265 Negro enrollees -- probably a few more. Yet, enrollment is only about two-thirds of capacity. Opportunities for training at least 92 more Negro defense workers are "unused".

2. Supplementary Defense Training For Adults

Any worker who is now employed on a skilled or semi-skilled job where additional training will enable him to advance may enroll in the "supplementary" National Defense classes at Armstrong High School or at Phelps Vocational School. Classes meet five nights per week, from 6:00 to 10:00 P.M. Courses, enrollments and vacancies are tabulated below.

Subject	Enrollment	Vacancies
Armstrong High School		
Automobile Mechanics	21	--
Electricity	20	--
Machine Shop Practice	9	11
Total	50	11
Phelps Vocational School		
Airplane Engine Mechanics	15	5
Automobile Mechanics	18	2
Cabinet and Mill Work	14	6
Electricity	18	2
Machine Shop Practice	20	-
Welding	20	-
Total	105	15

Thus, these two schools offer 9 "supplementary" defense training classes in 6 different fields. They are equipped to handle 120 enrollees, and are operating at about 87 per cent capacity. There are "unused" training opportunities for 15 additional workers.

3. Defense Training For Non-School Youth

There are three defense training programs designed especially to serve youth for whom the regular school programs do not suffice: (a) the new National Youth Administration (N.Y.A.) Work Center at Old Dennison School, and (b) the Out-Of-School-Youth (O.S.Y.) program at Phelps Vocational School, and (c) the original N.Y.A. training program carried on at four different locations.

C. Original NYA Training Program

In addition to the new NYA Work Center described above, the National Youth Administration still conducts the original youth training program which it began several years ago. It is open to youth between the ages of 16 and 24, inclusive, and involves 80 hours per month in production, together with related training.

In this program also youth are given a free health examination, one meal per day, and are paid $19.20 per month. Classes are held at four different places: Cardoza High School (9th Street and Rhode Island Ave., N.W.), Washington Vocational School (O Street between 1st and No. Capital, N.W.), Phelps Vocational School (23rd Street, N.E.), and the N.Y.A. Work Center at Old Dennison School (1327 S Street, N.W.). All applications are received and certifications made at the NYA office at the Old Dennison School.

Classes meet five times per week at different times during the day as outlined below.

Subject	Period	Enrollment	Vacancies
Cardoza High School			
Typing III	3:30 to 6:30 PM	16	14
Washington Vocational School (Girls)			
Home Nursing	10:30 AM to 3:30 PM	47	13
Laundering	3:30 to 6:00PM	20	--
Typing I	1:00 to 4:00 PM	21	9
Typing II	1:30 to 4:30 PM	26	--
Phelps Vocational School			
Landscape Planning	12:00 M. to 3:00 PM	26	19
Related Subjects I (Science)	7:00to 11:00 AM	56	--
NYA Work Center			
Institutional Cooking	9:00 AM to 12:00 M	16	9
Advanced Inst. Cooking	1:00 to 4:00 PM	20	10
Power Machine Operation	1:30 to 4:30 PM	76	--
	Total	324	74

This NYA training program is operating at about 81 per cent capacity. In the various classes, which can accommodate a gross enrollment of 398 trainees, there are some 74 vacancies. Here, again, are unused opportunities in a training program in which Negro youth are paid to take part.

It should be noted that many Negro girls enrolled in typing under this program are assigned to work projects in the clerical pools of a number of government agencies. In some cases they work in offices where Negro clerical workers have never been employed.

4. Regular Day and Evening School Programs of Vocational Education.

In addition to the special defense training programs for adults and youth, there are extensive opportunities in the regular public evening schools and day schools for various types of vocational education. Many of the courses afford valuable and thorough training for skilled employment in defense industries.

Evening School Programs

Courses in vocational education are offered at a number of schools. Classes meet on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday, from 8:00 to 10:00 P.M. Any person who has day-time employment on a job for which evening school training will make him better prepared, is eligible to take part in these courses. Application for enrollment should be made at the Principal's Office in the school one wishes to enter. Students can enter and leave these courses at any time they desire.

The vocational courses offered in the evening schools, together with gross enrollments and vacancies (as of January 28), are outlined below.

Armstrong Evening School

A course if offered in Stationary Engineering on Tuesday and Friday evenings. As of January 28, there were 25 students enrolled in this course, the maximum number for which facilities are adequate.

During the spring semester (scheduled to begin February 9, 1942), additional courses will be offered in Interior Printing and Decorating. It can accommodate 20 students.

Phelps Evening School

The following two courses are being offered:

Brickmasonry - 16 students enrolled; 4 vacancies.
Printing - 8 students enrolled; 12 vacancies.

The following additional courses were scheduled to begin on February 9:

Estimating and Blueprint Reading - facilities for 25 students.
Shoe Repairing - facilities for 20 students.

Washington Evening School

The following courses are being offered:

Barber Science -- 9 students enrolled; 11 vacancies.
Barber Science and Skills (Apprenticeship Course) -- 8 students enrolled; 12 vacancies.
Busheling and Tailoring (Men) -- 18 students enrolled; 2 vacancies.
Cosmetology -- 25 students enrolled; 5 vacancies.
Dyeing and Cleaning -- 23 students enrolled; no vacancies.
Trade Sewing (women) -- 15 students enrolled; 5 vacancies.
Clothing for the Family -- 21 students enrolled; 4 vacancies.
Clothing for the Family -- 28 students; no vacancies.
Child Care and Home Nursing -- 16 students enrolled; 9 vacancies.
Household Crafts -- 18 students enrolled; 7 vacancies.
Foods for the Family -- 14 students enrolled; 11 vacancies.

An additional course in Cosmetology II (open for employed operators or owners of beauty shops) is scheduled to begin on February 9. It can accommodate 20 students.

Francis Evening School

Foods for the Family -- 23 students enrolled; 2 vacancies.
Foods and Nutrition -- 27 students enrolled; 48 vacancies.

Garnet -Patterson Evening School

Household Crafts -- 16 students enrolled; 9 vacancies.

Randall Evening School (transferred to Shaw Evening School 2nd Semester)

Foods for the Family -- 7 students; 18 vacancies.

Day-School Programs

Vocational courses for regular day-time students are offered at four different schools. Classes meet five days per week. The courses offered, total enrollments and vacancies (i.e. "unused" opportunities) are outlined below.

Phelps Vocational School (Boys) (8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.)

The following courses are offered:

Airplane Engine Mechanics	Machine Shop
Automobile Mechanics	Plumbing
Brickmasonry	Printing
Carpentry	Sheet Metal
Drafting	Shoe Repair
Electricity	Spray-Brush Painting

Total (gross) enrollment -- 269
Number of vacancies -- 221

WASHINGTON VOCATIONAL SCHOOL (Girls) (8:30 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.)

The following courses are offered:

Cosmetology (Elementary)	Home Service (Foods)
Cosmetology (Advanced)	Laundering
Dressmaking (Elementary)	Plain Sewing (Elementary)
Dressmaking (Advanced)	Plain Sewing (Intermediate)
Dyeing and Cleaning	Power Machine Operating
Food Services (Elementary)	Tailoring
Food Services (Advanced)	Child Care and Home Nursing and Foods

Total (gross) enrollment -- 330
Number of vacancies -- 437

Armstrong High School (9:00 A.M. to 3: P.M.)

Two courses are offered in Homemaking and one course in Homemaking and Clothing. The gross enrollment in these courses is 213; there are no vacancies.

Cardoza High School (8:45 A.M. to 3:15 P.M.)

The following courses, in preparation for distributive occupations, are offered:

Techniques of Effective Selling
Business Records
Problems of Advertising and Promotion
Financial and Business Management
Merchandising of Foods and Food Services
Merchandising Cosmetics and Cosmetic Services

Total (Gross) enrollment -- 282
Number of vacancies -- 72

5. College and University Training

Howard University has just announced a number of free "defense" courses for men and women who wish to prepare for special war-time service. Many of these courses afford training for defense jobs in government agencies and in industry. Among the courses offered are the following:

Radio Technology
First Aid
R.O.T.C. (Basic Courses)
Chemistry of Explosives
Spanish (Refresher courses)
Personnel Administration
Economics
Mathematics
Nutrition
Canteen Work
Child Development
Home Nursing
Psychology of Modern Warfare
Physics
Chemistry
Engineering
Instrumental Analysis (Basic training in the use of such precision instruments as the spectroscope, calorimeter, refractometer, chemical microscope, etc.)

Application for entrance into these courses should be made to the Office of the Registrar, Howard University.

In addition to these special defense courses, Howard University's regular program affords superior opportunities for students who want s pecial training in such technical fields as engineering, physics, chemistry, economics, foreign languages, vocational guidance, vocational education, psychology, business management, medicine, dentistry, and many others in which the war emergency has created an ever-increasing demand.

Miner T eachers College offers 10 or 12 "in service" courses for the training of vocational teachers for the District schools. Considering the great need and acute shortage of well-trained Negro vocational teachers, these courses constitute an important part of the whole defense-training program.

TRAGIC WASTE

Two important truths stand out from the above tabulations of vocational courses, enrollments*, and vacancies: (1) There are abundant opportunities for youth and adults, during the day or at night, to obtain valuable preparation for defense employment at public expense; and (2) far too many of these opportunities are being neglected. This is a time when the nation must have many additional millions of skilled workers if it is to win the Battle of Production, and thus the war. This is also a time when opportunities for qualified Negroes to obtain skilled jobs are greater than ever before. For us now to neglect our opportunities for defense training is both shortsighted and unpatriotic. It represents tragic waste!

CONSTRUCTIVE "NEXT STEPS" OUR COMMUNITY SHOULD TAKE

The problem with which this whole situation confronts our community is this: How can we get the maximum number of Negro workers trained in the shortest possible time to meet the increasing demands of war production? It is a problem for the whole community. Public school authorities, city officials, and interested groups of citizens--all must direct their efforts toward its solution. Here are a few practical steps that we should take.

1. Short courses should be organized in regular school programs of vocational education. The leisurely three or four-year courses which now predominate are quite inadequate to meet the pressing needs of war production.

2. All defense training facilities should be operated on a twenty-four-hour basis. Why should the splendid equipment at Old Dennison School stand idle between 5 p.m. and 8 a.m.? Why should this same situation obtain at Cardoza High School after 6 p.m., and at Washington Vocational High School after 10 p.m.? This part-time use of available training facilities is wholly inconsistent with the needs of the present emergency.

3. Provision should be made to accommodate adult enrollees in "pre-employment" training courses prior to the midnight shift. There seems to be no good reason why "pre-employment" and "supplementary" enrollees should not be handled in combined classes, beginning at 6 p.m. at Armstrong High School and at Phelps Vocational High School. Instruction is largely individual anyway. Further,

the conduct of work at Old Dennison School of evenings would make "pre-employment" courses more readily available to many adult trainees.

4. As the demand increases, existing facilities for the training of Negro defense workers should be expanded. They should provide for all types of training which our war-industry demands. Abundant federal funds are now available for this purpose. They should be used to the utmost in our community.

5. Under no condition should Negroes be deprived of any of the training facilities now at hand. There are persistent rumors that the excellent equipment at Old Dennison School may be taken over for use with other groups. We hope these rumors are false. Certainly no such proposal should be seriously entertained.

6. Negro women should be encouraged to enter into all lines of defense training. Approximately 1,000,000 additional women workers will have to be employed on defense jobs during 1942. Negro women should be fully represented in this number. Traditional attitudes that would restrict their training to clerical and domestic service occupations must promptly be dispelled. Negro women should obtain training as draftsmen, machinists, automobile and airplane mechanics, and as many other types of defense workers. They, quite as well as other women, are able and will have opportunity to fill such positions.

7. The guidance and placement services of the public schools should be markedly expanded, and especially should they be geared to the needs of war production. School children non-school youth, and adults should be afforded expert assistance in choosing defense training courses to pursue, and in getting into the right jobs after they are trained. This is important, not solely to further individual adjustment, but especially to speed up and win the wartime Battle of Production.

8. Defense training facilities should be widely advertized. Public school authorities could do much more than at present to acquaint the community with available training facilities. Civic, fraternal, church, parent-teacher, labor and other organizations can do even more. Every opportunity should be utilized widely to disseminate information about available facilities. Every effort should be made to encourage Negro citizens to make full use of those facilities.

NOW IS THE TIME TO MOVE!

The educational counterpart of "business as usual" is the equally bad practice of "school as usual". Let not this opiate stultify the war-time effort of our nation to train workers for the Battle of Production. Officials in charge of defense training programs must make facilities available for maximum use, and must "step-up" the tempo of instructional programs.

Individual Negro workers must quickly prepare themselves to fill the jobs which our expanding war industry in creating. Organized groups of citizens must stimulate school officials, their own members and other citizens to further the development and expansion of a truly all-out program for the wartime training of defense workers. This is one of the most crucial problems before the nation today. Now is the time for us to move!

NATIONAL NEGRO CONGRESS
717 FLORIDA AVE., N. W.
WASHINGTON, D. C.

Sec. 562, P. L. & R.

Mr. Geo. Wade
2124 - 2nd St., N.W.
Washington, D. C.